

(**Washington D.C.**) - Congressman Robert C. "Bobby" Scott (D-VA-03) today voted in favor of H.R. 976, the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2007.

The bill re-authorizes the State Children's Health Insurance Plan (S-CHIP), which currently provides health insurance to 6 million children in America who would otherwise be uninsured.

"H.R. 976 increases the number of children receiving coverage by about 3 million, but only covers one-third of the 9 million children who are currently uninsured in America. We still have a long way to go," said Representative Scott.

H.R. 976 would provide dental benefits to children in the S-CHIP program. The bill also improves some mental health coverage and encourages, but does not guarantee, more coverage for pregnant women.

Unfortunately, the bill does not guarantee coverage for preventative, screening or diagnostic purposes.

The bill also does not provide vision coverage.

Regrettably, the bill also eliminates coverage for parents, college-age adults, and legal immigrants who currently have S-CHIP coverage in some states.

Rep. Scott added, "I am glad that Congress is taking this step. The next step ought to move us closer to the day when every child and family in America is covered with comprehensive insurance."

“I am also concerned that the bill is paid for by an increase of the Federal Excise Tax on Tobacco,” Congressman Scott said. “This tax disproportionately affects low-income individuals and is therefore regressive. It is unfortunate that we would raise these taxes in the same year that we have cut taxes for American millionaires.”

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